GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
EXTERNAL AFFAIRS
LOK SABHA

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO:537
ANSWERED ON:25.07.2001
NATIONAL MISSILE DEFENCE SYSTEM
C. SREENIVAASAN;MADHAVRAO SCINDIA;PUTTASWAMY GOWDA;RENUKA CHOWDHURY;SURESH KURUP;SUSHIL KUMAR SAMBHAJIRAO SHINDE

Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) the Indian stand on the National Missile Defence System proposed by the USA;

(b) the details thereof; and

(c) the Government`s assessment of the impact of this policy on World Peace?

Answer

MINISTER OF STATE FOR EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI U.V. KRISHNAM RAJU)

(a), (b) & (c) Following President Bush`s Statement of 1st May 2001, the US Deputy Secretary of State, Mr. Richard Armitage, visited India on 11th May 2001 for consultations. He elaborated that President Bush had outlined in his Statement a `New Strategic Framework` comprising four elements, i.e., non-proliferation, counter-proliferation, missile defence, and a reduction in US strategic nuclear forces. He said that the consultations were exploratory and that he had no details to offer at that stage on the missile defence plans. Government conveyed to Mr. Armitage that the proposed New Strategic Framework, based upon consultation and cooperation rather than confrontation, was a welcome development. India emphasised the need to not unilaterally abrogate bilateral compacts like the ABM Treaty of 1972 or other similar international commitments. Government also conveyed India`s expectation that the US would pursue its plans in a manner that enhances regional and international stability and security, and would continue to be guided by the spirit of dialogue, consultation and cooperation. In particular, Government welcomed the US intention regarding reduction in, and de-alerting of, nuclear weapons. India treats this as a step towards winding down of the nuclear arms race.